



# STATE OF IDAHO

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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### **To Determine Whether to Register a Product as a Fertilizer or a Soil & Plant Amendment:**

In Idaho, a *fertilizer* is defined as any substance containing one or more recognized plant nutrients and which is used for its plant nutrient content and which is designed for use or claimed to have value in promoting plant growth, including limes and gypsum.

Any products containing a “*guaranteed analysis*” of plant nutrient value or a “*grade*” are classified as fertilizers. As of July 2000, when the Idaho Fertilizer Law was revised, manipulated animal manures (formerly regulated as fertilizers) were reclassified as soil amendments if the labeling does not include a guaranteed analysis of plant nutrients or a grade.

*Soil amendments* are any substances that are intended to improve the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of the soil except commercial fertilizers and unmanipulated animal and vegetable manures. This classification includes materials such as those providing soil microorganisms, and materials stabilizing soil against erosion that can occur during irrigation, as well as many soil conditioners.

*Plant Amendments* are any substances applied to plants or seeds which are intended to improve germination, growth, or other desirable characteristics of plants. Potting soils and growing media are also included in this classification.

Unmanipulated animal manures, unmanipulated vegetative organic waste-derived materials (grass clippings, leaves, weeds, bark, plantings, prunings and other vegetative wastes, wood wastes from logging and milling operations, food wastes), and mulch are exempt from both the Idaho Fertilizer Law and the Idaho Soil and Plant Amendments Law.

There are hybrid products that are intended to be useful as a combination of these classifications, particularly those that act as both a fertilizer and a soil amendment. In these cases, *products are regulated as fertilizers when they contain a guaranteed analysis of plant nutrients or a grade, and are subject to the Idaho Fertilizer Law and Rules including the required labeling format for fertilizers.* These hybrid products may make claims for both their plant nutrient values and their soil amending qualities.

It is also possible that the labeling of hybrid products may refer to nutrient content *without a nutrient guarantee* and may state nutrient values as an estimate or a range. In this case, they are regulated as soil amendments.